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TWO HUNDRED AND ONE
SAN FRANCISCANS
EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON THE
PROBLEMS FACING THE CITY AND
WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

a report sponsored by

SAN FRANCISCANS SEEKING CONSENSUS

March, 1984

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FOREWORD

About SFSC

San Franciscans Seeking Consensus (SFSC) is an ad hoc group of citizens, neighborhood representatives, business leaders and city officials (see page 7 for list of members) who for the past year have been informally investigating this question: Is real collaboration in planning for San Francisco's future possible and, if it is, what are the dimensions of the problems that must be addressed?

SFSC was formed because several major planning efforts were all under way at the same time. A variety of events, trends and conditions have been transforming the City in a number of ways. The population mix has undergone significant changes in recent years. A shift in governmental service funding has forced the City to be more fiscally self-reliant. City, business and community people see a need to link existing planning projects with a clearer picture of where San Franciscans want the City to be in the next ten to twenty years.

In its deliberations to date, SFSC has tried not to advocate or promote any one point of view. Its goal has been to see if there are some common agreements on the problems the City faces and how they can be dealt with successfully.

Preliminary Information Gathering Steps

In the initial stages of SFSC, consideration was given to the possibility of first conducting a large-scale quantitative study in which a cross section of San Francisco residents would be interviewed. After some thought, it was decided that it would be better to take a more exploratory first step in getting feedback from community influentials.

That step was to hold a number of group discussions with as many of the City's influentials and opinion leaders as would participate. An extensive list was compiled of 427 prominent people who were identified as representing or speaking for one or more community interests. Each was invited to participate in a small, informal group discussion, with the size of the group ranging from eight to twelve people. A total of 201 influentials and opinion leaders accepted the invitations and twenty-two different sessions were held during the summer months of 1983. Most of the sessions were held in the evening. However, to accommodate the schedules of some invitees, generally business people, a few sessions were held during the day.

Those moderating the group sessions were Elaine Bandalin, Judith Brown, Larry Bye, Leslie Schumann and Mike Stein. Each is a professional researcher who fulfilled the role of being a neutral stimulator/moderator for the sessions.

The moderators made a special effort to be sure that everyone's opinion was heard. At the end of each session, an individual written report, summarizing the variety of views expressed, was prepared by the moderator.

About the Report

This report is an attempt to summarize the comments and points of view expressed in the different sessions. A summary of the impressions gained from the twenty-two focus group sessions appears on pages 14-23. Following that (in the Appendix section) are the unadorned comments of the participants, as well as comments and observations of the discussions as interpreted by the moderators. Each comment or summary is listed in one or two sentences or a short paragraph. The comments and points of view expressed have been arranged under relevant topic headings.

No formal tallies have been made of the comments expressed.

However, in preparing this report, the written summary of each session was carefully reviewed and most of the comments expressed by a participant or an interpretation listed by the moderator regarding specific topics (e.g., housing, jobs, transportation) were abstracted and listed here. Thus, the extent of the comments generally relates to the frequency with which they appeared in all the individual summaries prepared by the moderators.

The five group moderators and Chuck Forester (Staff Director of SFSC) collaborated with Mervin Field in the preparation of this report.

Some Words of Caution

The people participating in the sessions, while considered to be influentials, are not necessarily representative of all the

influentials affecting the life of San Francisco. In fact, moderators noted frequent expressions by the participants that the people who have the real power in San Francisco were underrepresented in the sessions and that those who have disproportionately less power were overrepresented.

The sessions were free-flowing and they generated spirited discussions, comments and, in some cases, arguments. While the moderators tried to follow a guideline of topics and tried to cover each one, this was not always possible.

In focus group sessions, it frequently happens that one or more dominant personalities tend to preempt the discussion or the agenda. When these situations occur, they affect the other participants, who are either influenced to go along with the dominant personality's position or to take issue with a viewpoint being expressed in order to demonstrate their own independence. Others may just keep quiet and not speak up.

Each group was formed to include a range of views and activities in the hope that participants would be stimulated to voice their views at the fullest. However, actual attendance usually fell short of that goal and, as a result, the balance of many groups was often skewed and the discussions reflected this. Thus, the findings presented here are a result of the unique, unstructured dynamics of the many sessions and may not reflect the findings that would emerge from a more rigorously controlled, systematic study.

Group Discussion Outline
Used By Moderators

I. Welcome and Introduction of Moderator

A. Explanation of SFSC; its goals and reasons for being:

Broad spectrum of opinion leaders concerned about major issues facing the city, helping to plan for city's future, attempting to identify the issues, looking for solutions, etc.

B. Explanation of project purpose and design:

SFSC looking for feedback from community leaders, those who influence others, to help guide the group in its endeavors.

C. Explanation of focus group procedure:

No-risk atmosphere, everyone given the opportunity to express their views, no agreement required, role of moderator, confidentiality, no prepared notes to be read, issues limited to San Francisco only, etc.

D. Self introductions of participants.

*(approximately
20 minutes)*

II. Selection and Group Discussion of Topics

A. Each respondent will be asked first to talk about his/her "vision of what he/she wants the city to be like in a decade; what is the "ideal city"?

Discussion of the difference/distinctions between "the way things are now" with respect to the specific problem/issue, and the way they should be, ideally, in future.

B. What kinds of resources and strengths does the city and its people have which can be built upon in order to achieve this vision(s)? What are the specific obstacles/barriers standing in the way of having the "vision" become reality?

- C. After topics/problems/issues have been surfaced, group will be asked to organize and prioritize them so that they can be dealt with individually. Expression of each respondent's point of view with regard to the topic under consideration.

For each problem area raised, discuss possible solutions/actions/processes necessary for resolution.

(approximately
60 minutes)

III. Implementation

- A. How can suggested changes be made to take place? Are there appropriate "next steps" for any of the topics discussed? What can be agreed upon as a next step?
- B. Who needs to participate in the process? To what extent do group members see themselves involved in the "next step" process?
- C. How should the decisions about change be made?
- D. What roles should government, big and small business, neighborhood and other groups play in the process?
- E. Is the idea of trying to reach a consensus the best way of dealing with the kinds of issues that have been discussed? Do group members see it as a process that can accomplish something? Can consensus be achieved? If so, how?

(approximately
55 minutes)

IV. Close and Acknowledge Participants

- A. What purpose did this discussion serve? How do participants now feel about SFSC? Any interest in greater involvement?
- B. Each participant will be asked to make any other summary comments that they wish and be thanked for their participation.

(approximately
15 minutes)

TOTAL TIME:

150 minutes

MEMBERS OF
SAN FRANCISCANS SEEKING CONSENSUS

Rosario Anaya, President
San Francisco Board of Education

Jerry E. Berg, Commissioner
Board of Permit Appeals

Charlotte Berk, Commissioner
San Francisco Redevelopment Agency

James R. Bronkema, President
Embarcadero Center

Jack Crowley, Secretary-Treasurer
San Francisco Labor Council

Carlota T. del Portillo
Civil Service Commissioner

Ben Dial, Vice President
Pacific Telephone & Telegraph

James M. Edgar, President
Edgar, Dunn & Company

Zuretti Goosby
Airport Commissioner

James Haas, Attorney
McCarthy & Schwartz

Anne Halstead, Vice President
U.S. Leasing International, Inc.

Aileen C. Hernandez
Aileen Hernandez & Associates

James Hudak
Arthur Andersen & Company

Jere Jacobs
District Staff Manager
Pacific Telephone & Telegraph

John Jacobs, Executive Director
San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

Arthur Kern, Vice President and
General Manager
KPIX

Donneter E. Lane
Executive Director
San Francisco Council of Churches

Toby Levine
Mission District Community Leader

Rolland C. Lowe, President
San Francisco Medical Society

Leslie Luttgens
Civic and Corporate Board Member

Dean Macris, Director
Department of City Planning

Tom Malloy, General Manager
Recreation and Parks Department

Caryl Mezey
Consultant

Walter Morris, Vice President
Standard Oil Company of California

Rudy Nothenberg, General Manager
Public Utilities Commission

Martin A. Paley, Director
The San Francisco Foundation

Brad Paul, Director
North of Market Planning Coalition

Louise H. Renne, Member
San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Toby Rosenblatt, President
San Francisco Planning Commission

Edwin Sarsfield, General Manager
Department of Social Services

Ty F. Scoggins, Vice President
Natomas Company

Edward F. Truschke, Vice President
and Executive Director
Bank of America Foundation

Yori Wada
Metropolitan YMCA

George A. Williams
Assistant Director of Planning

Harold T. Yee, President
Asian, Inc.

SUMMARY OF THE IMPRESSIONS GAINED FROM
THE TWENTY-TWO FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

A. The Vision of an Ideal San Francisco

Many participants expressed in a variety of ways the element of "diversity" in describing their vision of an ideal San Francisco. Such diversity relates to many different characteristics of the city, which are social, economic, ethnic and environmental. Diversity also relates to family composition, age and mix of different types of businesses and life-styles.

Stated more explicitly, an ideal San Francisco would have a sense of community. It would comprise different groups interacting with each other, rather than ethnic and cultural pockets that have little to do with one another. There would be less separation and alienation between downtown and the neighborhoods. There would be affordable housing available closer to the business center. Business would be reaching out into the community to encourage participation by neighborhood people in the economic life of the city.

Resource allocations to meet residents' needs would have a higher priority than making San Francisco a tourist haven or a corporate center. More attention would be paid to children's needs because a city without children is not healthy. There would be a revival of neighborhood economies which would enable small business and merchants to grow and prosper.

There would be more preservation of the unique character and charm of San Francisco's architectural heritage, neighborhood shops and dramatic views. The size and scale of San Francisco would be maintained so that it doesn't become another huge, confined megalopolis like New York or Los Angeles.

The rambunctious quality and unusual spirit of San Francisco would be retained.

It would be an independent city, part of the rest of the Bay Area, a place to live, a place to work, a place to raise a family, a place to enjoy life.

A review of the individual summaries prepared by the moderators would indicate that, in the main, session participants felt that San Francisco is far from this ideal situation.

B. San Francisco's Strengths and Resources

Despite the many cheerless comments offered and pre-occupation with the city's many problems, there was considerable hope for the future expressed by a number of participants.

One resource is a diverse and talented population that cares deeply about the city.

Other things working in the city's favor are the great tolerance of individual differences, the support for equal opportunity, and that racial bias and other forms of discrimination in San Francisco are less entrenched than in cities of similar size and density.

There is a strong sense of community and local pride existing in the city, and a diverse citizenry with innovative ideas to offer.

San Francisco has a tradition of citizen involvement and activism, and a willingness to experiment and lead the rest of the country.

San Francisco has a great location, climate and scale. Many influentials felt that it is not too late to affect the course of developments so that the city can remain viable, vibrant and attractive.

C. Obstacles and Problems That Need To Be Addressed If
San Francisco Is To Become a Better City

A whole host of perceived problems were offered by participants. They covered a wide range -- from well-defined, long-standing and hitherto intractable problems, such as downtown vs. neighborhood interests, housing, jobs and education, to problems relating to the changing social character and spirit of the city and an ineffective political process.

Expressions and recitals of the city's problems took many different forms.

High, prohibitive housing costs were mentioned repeatedly. The middle-class is being driven out and are now commuters. The city is seen as becoming a place for the very rich and the very poor.

Another recurring theme was that San Francisco is becoming a corporate headquarters city. Most saw the effects of this trend in a highly negative way. Such terms as "devastating," "destroying the city's diversity," "changing the whole character of the city" and "downtown growth needs to be managed" were typical descriptions of the trend.

The idea was often expressed that the big corporations use the city and take from it but contribute little or nothing to maintain the qualities that brought them here in the first place.

Another frequently mentioned problem was the lack of strong, cohesive local government machinery. Instead, there are continual, unproductive political battles with governmental leaders responsive only to special interests.

Frequently expressed dismal aspects of the city relate to the poor plight of the schools, transportation problems going unsolved, blue-collar workers can't find jobs in the city and are being pushed out, service jobs are becoming dominant, and small businesses are drying up.

Other complaints were that well-meaning community organizations, trying to do something about the city's problems, tend to get caught up in narrow issues. They fail to understand the real power relationships and how the decisions are made. As a result, it is felt that these organizations accomplish little, become more frustrated, and then become more divorced and isolated from one another.

The result of all these trends is that the city is becoming more fragmented and ghettoized, with growing pockets of impoverished senior citizens, immigrants living in overcrowded areas, and gays, the rich and other population groups crowding out other groups.

In addition, group participants made it clear that the ideas and energies of the city's population have become splintered and are no longer productive on a community-wide basis. The "can do" city has become polarized and paralyzed. Community spirit and goals are absent. The city's elected officials are more interested in reelections than hard decisions for the future. The media, particularly the city's major newspapers, do not give adequate attention to city issues. The city government bureaucracy is unwilling to take stands on hard issues. As a result, San Franciscans lack the facts and background to understand the complexity and implications of the issues which confront them today.

D. A Summary of Some Strongly Felt Impressions

1. San Francisco is changing in ways which do not reflect the needs and desires of all of its residents.
2. Many of the city's major problems are interrelated and should not be dealt with on a piecemeal basis. For example, the availability of jobs (their number and kinds) affects the kinds and supply of housing. The quantity and kinds of available housing affects the kinds of people who will live here, which in turn affects family size, ethnicity, skills of the working force, education, transportation, etc. Too many decisions are being made on one issue without proper consideration of how that decision will affect other issues.
3. Decisions are made in the absence of clearly stated, comprehensive goals and objectives. These need to be defined. They would help to unite the community, increase support, improve cooperation and speed implementation.
4. The many plans being proposed by the Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Plan Initiative, etc., have not and do not seem likely to unite the community behind them.

5. Any overall city plan should recognize and provide for city-wide changes which would address citizen needs for:

- .. housing
- .. jobs
- .. a well balanced population of ages, incomes, single people and families
- .. education to enable people to live together compatibly, with respect for one another and one's own abilities
- .. training and retraining to prepare residents for meaningful and rewarding jobs
- .. preserving the diversity and breadth of cultures which comprise the city
- .. integrating and strengthening the interpersonal relationships of San Franciscans
- .. social and health care for the elderly
- .. transportation and parking
- .. maintaining a desirable environment

E. Will Consensus Work?

While there were some expressions that consensus might be helpful, there was considerable doubt expressed that it would work. One barrier to consensus is the large number of players in San Francisco's political world. It was felt that there are too many different interests with strongly entrenched positions for consensus to be realized. A fear exists that the city may have become too factionalized with too many groups determined to be tough and avoid being co-opted by others.

There is the feeling that the public policy flows from power relationships within City Hall and not from any kind of consensus among the electorate.

One event which was pointed to as an example of the failure to achieve consensus is the proposed development of Mission Bay and other South of Market projects.

One unique factor mitigating against consensus is that too many of the problems are related to property rights. The feeling was expressed that it is difficult for consensus to be reached because everyone feels the need to compete for what little there is.

The pessimism about solving the city's problems through consensus was expressed in a variety of ways, but with the central theme that those with economic power get to call the shots.

Another participant's comment which seemed to be shared by many others was that, "While it is a form of catharsis to come together and discuss issues and ventilate frustrations, it is a waste of time. We, the powerless ones, are just talking to ourselves."

Some participants recognized that trying to fulfill many desired objectives would require contradictory actions. It was recognized that this only emphasizes the difficulty in attaining solutions. (Many individuals would offer contradictory opinions or suggestions without realizing it, presumably with the hope that government, industry or some other entity would find a way to reconcile the differences.)

F. Reactions to SFSC

While many participants were skeptical or suspicious of SFSC and its goals, they voiced some positive opinions about the organization. They felt that the sessions allowed a unique forum for interaction and they appreciated the opportunity to meet a lot of other community leaders face to face in a small group discussion and to learn what is behind their respective public positions.

Even among the most cynical participants, there was a grudging willingness to participate with an organization such as SFSC because doing nothing assures no results. The thought was expressed: "At least SFSC offers some hope for progress."

There seemed to be widespread agreement that the major need and goal of SFSC should be developing and insuring a process for dialogue and decisions, rather than zeroing in on an individual problem.

Many said they learned a lot from the discussions. Most want to continue the dialogue through one means or another. They felt that the discussions acted as a catalyst to encourage people to get together and exchange ideas and information. SFSC need not espouse any positions, but facilitate the process by which more people can be involved in discussing, deciding and implementing the direction of San Francisco's growth, development and future enjoyment.

Specifically, participants suggested that SFSC could fulfill several potential roles by:

- .. becoming a a central gathering place for various kinds of information considered to be vital to inform the community and help to make informed decisions,
- .. actively generating data and gather information which will demonstrate the interrelationships of various issues and alternatives,
- .. beginning a media effort, through existing channels or forming their own city affairs newsletter, to inform San Franciscans and regenerate interest and support for a comprehensive program,
- .. providing a time, place, discussion leader, topic and invite interested parties, resource people and the public to attend open discussions about important issues which bear on San Francisco future,

.. identifying, defining, planning and developing pilot projects which can begin to make the city move in new directions and serve to unite the community and set an example about how the city can proceed.

Most, if not all, participants are looking for some report from SFSC as a result of the sessions.

APPENDIX

The following chapters contain the actual comments offered by the participants in the twenty-two sessions or the paraphrased summaries prepared by the moderators on the topics discussed.

The chapters are arranged in the sequence of topics as they were discussed in the sessions. The comments have been listed in a slightly edited verbatim form. What editing has been done has been limited to removing the more extraneous, somewhat irrelevant comments.

In stating their views, many participants appear to be duplicating what others said. However, in some instances, while the essence of a comment is duplicated elsewhere, the flavor of the comment is somewhat different, and these have been retained wherever possible.

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I. THE VISION OF AN IDEAL SAN FRANCISCO

The following is a representative array of the desires, hopes, wishes and dreams for a future San Francisco, as expressed by session participants or summarized by the moderators.

- .. Maintaining diversity -- the ideal city is a solid mix of different socioeconomic groups, families, the elderly, the young, ethnic groups, recent arrivals, etc. The city would have a sense of community and would comprise different communities interacting with each other rather than ethnic ghettos that have little to do with one another. There would be less separation and alienation between 'downtown' and the neighborhoods. Affordable housing would be available closer to the business center. Business would reach out into the community to encourage participation by neighborhood people in the economic life of the city.
- .. San Franciscans would have defined a common purpose and goals toward which they would work. A shared purpose would generate new ideas and encourage new approaches to problem solving.
- .. The ethnic and social diversity of San Francisco should be preserved and enhanced in a spirit of mutual accommodation.
- .. Polarization, in and of itself, is not necessarily bad as long as political conflict is kept within reasonable bounds. Any city with as much diversity as San Francisco will be fairly polarized.
- .. More San Franciscans will enter the economic/political mainstream and fully participate by voting.
- .. There would be a more rational, comprehensive, holistic planning process that allows for the identification and solution of interrelated problems before they reach crisis proportions.
- .. The planning process should have both a long range "big picture" awareness and a sensitivity to immediate and individual impact.
- .. Not just planning, but effective implementation and follow-up assessment of these plans to see that needs are being met.

- .. Government should be truly responsive to local citizens and not "outside interests" such as large national and multinational corporations.
- .. An increase in government responsiveness to the needs of local citizens -- more to the needs of San Franciscans and less to the needs of downtown corporations and the tourist industry.
- .. Firm ground rules should be established for real estate investments. Once established, the rules should be honored by the city.
- .. Recognize that San Francisco now is not an ideal city and face up to its sordid problems.
- .. Resource allocations to meet residents' needs should have a higher priority than making San Francisco a tourist haven.
- .. More attention paid to children's needs: "A city without children is a city that is dying."
- .. Don't let racism discourage cooperative resolution of community problems which promotes ethnic ghettoization.
- .. There would be a revival of neighborhood economies which will enable small businesses and merchants to grow and prosper.
- .. Neighborhood economies revitalized so that merchants of small businesses can compete effectively against the franchises of chain stores that threaten to destroy neighborhood character.
- .. Public education reform and increased funding will prepare young people for jobs, imbue them with civic and democratic values. More preparation for immigrants from other cultures to play a successful and responsive role in American society.
- .. There will be expanded interest and participation in neighborhood and civic affairs on the part of all citizens in the city.
- .. Preservation of the unique character and charm of San Francisco's architectural heritage, dramatic views and neighborhood specialty shops.
- .. A process which helps people deal with problems before they become crises.
- .. Maintain manageable size and scale so that San Francisco doesn't become another huge, confined megalopolis like New York or Los Angeles.

- .. Retain the rambunctious quality and unusual spirit of the city. San Francisco should remain different from the rest of the cities in the country.
- .. San Francisco should be an independent city, part of the rest of the Bay Area, a place to live, a place to work, a place to raise a family, a place to enjoy life.
- .. Families will move back in.
- .. There won't be any problems in the schools and there will be more integration between races and cultures.
- .. Our small town feeling will be retained with many small neighborhoods and individual senses of identity and free expression.

II. THE RESOURCES AND STRENGTHS SAN FRANCISCO HAS TO BECOME A BETTER CITY

The following is a listing, emerging from the sessions, of San Francisco's strengths as it faces the future:

- .. There is great tolerance of individual differences and widespread support for equal opportunity.
- .. Less entrenched racial bias and other forms of prejudice exist in San Francisco than cities of similar size and density.
- .. A strong sense of community and local pride.
- .. A diverse citizenry with innovative ideas to offer.
- .. Limited geographic size reinforces a sense of interdependency and highlights the need for communication and cooperation.
- .. The city has an excellent health and human services delivery system. It is a model for the rest of the United States and attracts many people from outside the city.
- .. Its beautiful park system is one of the nation's best.
- .. The tradition of citizen involvement and activism in the city, a willingness to experiment and lead the rest of the country, and a diverse and talented population that cares deeply about the city.
- .. A good local public transit system.
- .. The best urban park system in the country, no matter how you measure it.
- .. A health care system that is recognized as one of the best in the country.
- .. The city has now and in the past responded generously to the needs of the aged, mentally ill, physically disabled and destitute.

- .. The progress made over the last two decades in the areas of air and water quality improvements.
- .. The city is still not too far gone; it is salvageable.
- .. A great location, climate and scale.
- .. The city's tolerance of divergent peoples and lifestyles, and its ability to change with the times -- these are its strengths.

III. OBSTACLES AND PROBLEMS THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED -- AN OVERVIEW

The perceived problems facing the city covered a wide range: from well-defined, long-standing and apparently intractable problems, such as housing, jobs, education, downtown vs. neighborhood interests, to problems relating to the changing social character and spirit of the city and an ineffective political process.

This chapter is a generalized summary of the range of problems and obstacles emerging from the sessions. Many of the problems are covered in the context of what ought to be done, rather than explicitly citing a problem. A more detailed categorization of the problem areas is listed in Chapter IV.

SUMMARY OF OBSTACLES AND PROBLEMS

- .. There should be a balance in the city of racial and life-style groups, of young and old, and of income groups. The city should pride itself on its tradition of diversity. This no longer seems possible, however, with middle classes and families being pushed out, senior citizens with nowhere to live, and the city becoming more and more "ghettoized."
- .. The reason for the changing population in San Francisco is economic. Housing costs are prohibitive. The city is becoming a place for the very rich and the very poor. All others are commuting in and out of the city to their homes in less financially constraining areas.
- .. San Francisco is becoming a corporate headquarters. This has had an extraordinary, if not devastating, impact on the quality of life in the city.
- .. The economy is too dominated by service sector industries. It is not diversified enough.
- .. The major barrier is the tendency for factions in the city to demand that their spokespeople be tough and never get co-opted. Ideologically motivated leaders are unpragmatic and many San Francisco leaders tend to be ideologues.
- .. The sheer number of players in San Francisco politics; consensus is easier to achieve if you've got a smaller number of groups to accommodate.
- .. Labor unions make unreasonable economic demands and make it harder to attract businesses.
- .. Public policy does not encourage the reinvestment of San Francisco-produced profits in the city.
- .. Public policy should encourage middle-class people to move back to San Francisco in order to provide a more stable community and broaden the tax base.
- .. The Board of Supervisors fights too much among its members and is too responsive to special interests. San Francisco is not getting strong, cohesive and inspiring leadership from its governmental authorities.
- .. Community organizations tend to get caught up in narrow issues rather than look at power relationships and how decisions are made. As a result, these organizations accomplish little, become more frustrated and are harder to deal with.

- .. The power goes to those who have or can raise money. "They" are more put together than "we." The gap is widening between the "have's" and the "have not's." The decision has already been made to make San Francisco a city for the rich.
- .. Better mechanisms for communication about solutions to San Francisco's problems are needed, both in terms of local media and government sponsored informational systems.
- .. San Francisco's civil service system renders its government departments ineffective because of its personnel recruitment and promotion policies.
- .. The charter should be changed so that the Mayor and Board of Supervisors have more responsibility for setting broad policy goals. Currently, the city's top elected leadership is too preoccupied with administration and implementation of policy.

"So many fights I've been involved in are needless. If the city was in agreement on the goal of halting displacement of middle income families, for example, then we wouldn't spend time arguing over a lot of housing related issues we are constantly fighting about."

- .. It is agreed that the "power elite" in the city -- government and otherwise -- is not representative of the population. Alternative ways of governing need to be explored, including an advisory board(s) comprised of appointed representatives from neighborhoods to serve in a policy function to the Board of Supervisors.
- .. Leaders need to be willing to say "no" to their primary supporters on occasion and exhibit more independent thinking in solving problems.
- .. If elected officials set the example, others might follow and that's what this fragmented community needs.
- .. The planning process should be both more aware of the 'big picture' and sensitive to the nuances of individual situations.
- .. City government is not willing to gauge the impact of continued high-rise construction on transit, housing and other city problems.
- .. The Mayor and Planning Department do not have a good process for dealing with neighborhood/community concerns until they blow up and can no longer be mediated or talked through.

.. The city and region lack good master plans and seem to be unable to stick to those they do have. So many exceptions are made that there really does not seem to be a plan.

.. San Francisco has no institution that is responsible for long-range planning.

"The Board of Supervisors spends too much time responding to immediate crises and often gets sidetracked on unimportant issues while the big issues with enormous long-range implications get almost no attention."

"Our leaders aren't looking ten years ahead...they're only looking at the next election cycle."

.. There is a need for more information and better management and analysis of long-range trends.

"We inventory land and physical structures...that is easy to quantify. We don't collect enough data on human resources and the social dimensions. It's no wonder that we can't make good decisions."

.. The process of government frustrates leaders who truly want to solve problems. Charter reform is necessary in order to clarify roles and responsibilities for the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, city boards and commissions, and other elected and appointed government bodies in the city.

.. The political process in San Francisco is too conflict-filled. Conflict is healthy in a democracy and inevitable in a city as diverse as San Francisco. However, there is too much polarization, hardened positions, a refusal to compromise and an absence of pragmatism in problem solving.

.. City government too often sides with downtown interests against the neighborhoods because they are better organized and more cohesive. "Money is part of it, but we (neighborhood-based coalitions) are so easy to pull apart. We don't have the staff or the time that downtown corporations do." Downtwon has the funds to contribute to local campaigns and that automatically gives them access and influence to make their positions known.

.. Initiative, referendum and recall allow extremist political groups to get too much attention and actually halt the orderly process of government:

"The recent Feinstein recall is a classic example. Every politician in the city had to drop everything in order to see which way the wind was blowing. Many serious problems were put on hold while people waited to see how the recall vote turned out."

- .. Some form of the initiative, referendum and recall processes is called for. They should be preserved. But there should be some limitation on how and when they can be used. The process is frequently abused by industry groups that have the funds to "undo" what elected officials have already decided.
- .. San Francisco's image as the "gay center of the world" is a concern, especially as it relates to attracting major new employers and to the improvement of the business climate.
- .. Solutions to housing, jobs, education, etc., must be creative and proactive, not defensive. There is too much reacting to the special interest groups who scream the loudest.
- .. While individuals in San Francisco are acknowledged to be very liberal, the city's policy institutions are quite conservative.
- .. New businesses and jobs need to be attracted to the city without contributing to the "Manhattanization" of San Francisco.
- .. The influx of foreign investment monies into San Francisco exacerbates the high cost of living.
- .. Developer profits should be assessed to pay for municipal services.
- .. San Francisco's reputation of avante-garde liberalism discourages economic expansion and the business community's participation in community problem solving.

IV. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

A. HOUSING IN GENERAL

- .. Demand for housing will not diminish and development will not diminish. The city is too desirable, too attractive to fall out of grace with those who want to live here, work here and build here. The issue, then, is to determine the kind of housing that should be provided.
- .. Lack of affordable rental housing is the most important problem facing the city.
- .. Except perhaps for jobs, no issue is as connected to the goal of preserving diversity as housing is.
- .. Tenant activities and housing developers have the mutual goal of building more housing -- they should find better mechanisms for overcoming their mutual sense of distrust and for working together.
- .. Developers and city officials should seek more neighborhood cooperation and support for specific housing proposals by involving the neighborhood early in the process and maintaining constant communication.
- .. Affordable housing is a critical issue in the city and the only way to make it possible would be with a combination of strong political leadership and an enlightened, involved business community.
- .. One participant's comment: "The kind of city you're going to have depends on the housing you build. If you want young families, kids growing up in the city, you have to build affordable accommodations for them. If you want single managerial types, you'll build for them."
- .. Prop. 13 has encouraged older people to stay in their homes even when no longer practical. This inhibits change in housing patterns in many neighborhoods.
- .. The susceptibility of San Francisco development plans to the political demands of special interest discourages investors from building housing in the city.
- .. It is neither desirable nor realistic to freeze all (housing) development in San Francisco.

A. HOUSING IN GENERAL (continued)

- .. One participant's comment: "If you have a master plan carefully put together and a group of people who sincerely look at it... the total picture, that is... maybe we could get some decisions made to solve the (housing) problem."
- .. (There should be more) recognition of the forces which currently constrain the supply of rental housing in the local economy. Stronger leadership could make a difference in solving the (housing) problem.
- .. The city should step up efforts to encourage the construction of rental housing using every available policy instrument at its disposal.
- .. The city should discourage speculation, while at the same time guaranteeing owners the right to a profit on the sale of property.
- .. Allow in-law units to be made available on the local housing market.
- .. New housing is being build predominately by small builders, not big developers.
- .. The city should have a goal of providing affordable housing for all people who live here and adopt rent control, land use, and other housing related policies that are consistent with this goal.
- .. Grassroots organizing projects (regarding housing), such as the present effort by unions and churches, should be encouraged because they help overcome communication problems and fighting among special interest groups.
- .. City pension funds should be invested in local facilities and housing.

A. HOUSING COSTS, RENTS, SUBSIDIES

- .. San Francisco needs not just simply more housing, but more affordable housing.
- .. The city must mandate affordable housing because developers want more than a reasonable return on their investment.
- .. Social welfare non-profits should be encouraged to build affordable housing using public and pension funds.
- .. Publicly subsidized low-interest loans are too often applied unnecessarily to high-income housing.
- .. Rent increases are especially hard on people with fixed incomes.
- .. Rent control should be applied on a case-by-case basis, not as a blanket rule.
- .. There should be tax incentives to encourage property owners to rehabilitate existing housing.
- .. More attention should be given to mixed use development approaches and to residential housing projects that combine market rate with subsidized housing units.
- .. Removing rent control restrictions to allow market rate housing prices will reduce the demand for housing in San Francisco.
- .. San Francisco needs not simply greater amounts of housing, but more affordable housing.
- .. There should be firm guarantees of no rent control on newly constructed housing.
- .. The need for moderate and low cost housing is too critical to leave to chance: it must be mandated, ordinances must be passed, political means must be used to ensure that there will be room left for the less advantaged.

A. HOUSING COSTS, RENTS, SUBSIDIES (continued)

- .. The idea of forcing a new hotel in the Tenderloin to subsidize housing in the area brought forth these opposing views in one session.

One participant said: "They (the developers) are being given an opportunity to make a fortune here. It's part of the price they have to pay."

Another participant said: "I just can't get used to the idea that you can tell someone what to do with their property and how to do it."

- .. Lack of low and moderate income housing is one of the major problems facing the city. Without it, there will be a movement of people to the suburbs and a resultant loss of businesses as they move to follow their labor pool.
- .. Low income housing built in the past, such as The Pink Palace, has not worked very well. Additional low income units should be smaller and dispersed around the city to avoid creating new ghettos.

A. HOUSING AS IT RELATES TO DOWNTOWN, CORPORATE, COMMERCIAL, OFFICE CONSTRUCTION

- .. Developers should be encouraged to build rental housing as a condition of their receiving approval of commercial development projects.
- .. Too much downtown development is creating pressure on the housing market.
- .. Increasing Financial District office development is creating an area uninhabited after work hours.
- .. Developers should be obliged to incorporate affordable housing within each downtown project.
- .. Low/moderate income people are being forced out by commercial development. Expensive condos stand vacant while people go without adequate housing.
- .. The prevailing attitude is that the future of San Francisco does not belong to its citizens, who are powerless, but rather to the corporations and investors who are "buying up" the city. There is too much commercial development encroaching on residential areas. There is a trend toward 'gentrification' that reduces the number of housing units and causes the city to lose diversity. It would become another Manhattan, strictly a city to make money in.

Some comments by participants:

"It's nowhere written down that people will be pushed out of the neighborhoods -- no politician is going to say that -- but everytime they build a highrise downtown, and executive types move in and can afford to buy, they kick renters out."

"There are no places left in San Francisco for minorities to rent or buy."

- .. There is little hope for solutions to the housing problem. The city planners condone housing being converted to commercial use, and the corporations' official policy seems to be to drive out low-income people.
- .. There is an obligation on the part of large landowners, such as Southern Pacific, to build low or moderate priced housing.

A. HOUSING AS IT RELATES TO DOWNTOWN, CORPORATE, COMMERCIAL,
OFFICE CONSTRUCTION (continued)

- .. San Francisco is becoming a corporate headquarters. This has had an extraordinary and devastating impact on the quality of life in the city. Neighborhoods have been torn up to make way for business, or to make room for the kinds of people the businesses want to hire, creating social unrest and instability. Low and moderate income housing has been eliminated, leaving low and moderate income people no choice but to leave town. One participant's comment: "They (low and moderate-income people) are being manipulated into leaving town by the city and by business."
- .. Too much downtown office construction is creating bad pressure on the housing market.
- .. Downtown business establishment should be persuaded to subsidize some of this housing, and the city government ought to do more about the issue than what it is doing now. One participant's comment: "(The city) is talking a good game and doing nothing."
- .. It may be "bad public policy" to ask downtown developers to play a role in solving housing problems, but it is "a good source of revenue at a time when there are few other sources."

A. HOUSING AS IT RELATES TO CERTAIN TYPES OF PEOPLE

- .. A major priority should be the creation of more housing for families with children.
- .. There should be a city policy to ensure rental opportunities at all economic levels in the city.
- .. There is no longer a place for low income or for senior citizens; San Francisco has become a city for the very poor or the affluent. There is more and more emphasis on professional white-collar residents, while blue-collar industries decline and families are forced out.
- .. Housing is needed for the less than rich. This means an end to part of the economic depredation facing some of the minority members of the community.
- .. The reality of diminishing space and an influx of immigrants must be faced. If they are to stay, they must be accommodated, probably with smaller units and higher density than anyone with our traditions would consider ideal, and probably in areas where no neighborhoods now exist.
- .. Another important step would be to identify the groups coming in who are in need of housing: What are their needs? Are they settling or just passing through? What can they afford?
- .. It is important to attract middle and upper-income residents to the city. As one group member said, "Bear in mind we have to maintain the tax base to take care of all these social programs. No one bothers to develop housing for middle-income people."
- .. The city should attempt to attract homeowners. One participant's comment: "Do we want more owners? Or should all of our efforts be expended toward renters who are quite frequently transient? I think there is something to be said for maximizing the number of owners who have a stake in the community."

A. HOUSING AS IT RELATES TO BUILDING CODES, ZONING,
RESTRICTIONS

- .. Both general areas of the city and specific parcels of land should be identified as priority locations for housing.
- .. Communications from the Planning Department should be in plain English.
- .. County government should speed up the permit process to facilitate the construction of more housing.
- .. One participant's comment: "You need a Ph.D. to thread your way through (the building codes). We do everything to discourage construction."
- .. A first step in ensuring a future for lower cost housing would be to examine housing restrictions that have not changed with changing times, and are clearly a handicap to affordable housing.
- .. New housing development is discouraged by legislation regarding rent control, density, building codes and union-required building techniques.
- .. Restrictions on condo conversions hamper efforts to attract more middle and upper-middle income people in the city. Condo restrictions protect current renters who can't afford to buy their apartments.
- .. A simplification and easing of the zoning and permit process is necessary so that there is not so much "red tape" for people to deal with.
- .. The zoning and permit processes regulating new construction inhibit new building. New projects which other cities would welcome with open arms are greeted with endless red tape in San Francisco.

A. HOUSING TYPES, DENSITY, LOCATION

- .. Neighborhood groups often use their political power to the detriment of the city's overall good by opposing increased housing density.
- .. There should be more mixed-use development projects.
- .. Incentives should be provided to encourage the rehabilitation of old housing.
- .. There is too much neighborhood opposition to greater housing density.
- .. San Francisco needs to retain whatever financial balance exists in housing availability and should enhance the housing situation to include more low and moderate cost units.
- .. Personal mediation by the Mayor could be used effectively in allaying neighborhood fears about higher density housing patterns.
- .. Development in the South of Market area can be planned to keep a housing and job mix that included blue-collar work and low-income housing.
- .. There is too much neighborhood opposition to greater housing density -- based on lack of communication, fear of change and racism.

A. HOUSING AS IT AFFECTS OTHER CITY INSTITUTIONS,
POPULATION MIX

- .. Make sure that low income people have a decent, safe place to live and halt the displacement of moderate income families who are rapidly leaving the city.
- .. Unless a solution is found, the city will lose a large share of its low and middle income population.
- .. Housing is where the shift to singles pressures prices upward and reduces a family and neighborhood orientation.
- .. The high cost of housing is driving families/middle class out of San Francisco.
- .. The high cost of housing is shifting San Francisco's residential population from families to high-income singles/childless couples.
- .. If housing patterns are not altered, schools would be completely segregated within ten years.

B. EDUCATION

- .. Many problems faced by the schools are caused by the social and family backgrounds of students. A large percentage of students comes from single parent families, poor backgrounds and homes where there is little encouragement to excel. In the words of one participant, "We need to either lower our expectations about what we want the schools to produce or get tough and give the schools the resources necessary to mold kids."
- .. Many problems relating to education: a lack of money (although throwing money at a problem does not necessarily solve it), an influx of young people from different cultures, low education standards and a shift in responsibility of ethical and social training from the home to schools.
- .. A major priority for the schools has to be educating young people about the work ethic. Simply teaching job related skills is not enough because too many San Francisco children come from cultural and social backgrounds where there is no emphasis on how to be successful on the job.
- .. The educational system must play an expanded role in breaking down racial, cultural and ethnic stereotypes.
- .. Public schools have been saddled with many responsibilities not simply related to teaching. They are expected to play a leading role in integrating society, socializing immigrants and solving many other social problems. The community needs to understand these important responsibilities and recognize how vital the schools are to the creation of a livable society. There needs to be more "educational outreach about the role of the schools."
- .. It is important to most of the groups to continue the process of desegregating the schools -- or at least to ensure equal educational availability in all schools.
- .. White, affluent parents have taken their children out of the public school system and are paying dearly to keep them in private schools. Because of this, the attitude toward public schools becomes one of resentment over the money they cost since their children are no longer in them.

B. EDUCATION (continued)

- .. San Francisco residents, many of whom are single, must get over the idea that public education should be the sole responsibility of those with children in the school system. Education should be a community responsibility. Communities, as well as downtown businesses, must, themselves, be educated as to the importance of supporting and participating in public education.
- .. Since it is assumed that, for the most part, the third-world children in the city's schools will not be fit to participate in the city's economic and business life, these children are not trained for it and are left unprepared.
- .. Because San Francisco is increasingly a headquarters city and wants to hire only the well educated, middle class, there are no jobs (even low paying ones) for those who are in the process of learning.
- .. The devaluing of public education as a way of keeping minorities poor and powerless is a political decision and is not likely to change through "begging and pleading."
- .. The pockets of strong racial imbalance and the need for better teacher/role models out of the representative ethnic segments.
- .. School crowding, large classes and poor physical facilities also contribute to poor performance.
- .. Better schools will attract more businesses and employment to San Francisco.
- .. Improvements in the educational system will hasten the return of the middle class to San Francisco, thereby enhancing the city's tax base.
- .. Education must deal with preparing people for work, as well as ethics and academic subjects.
- .. Because of changes in the world and national economy and the related loss of blue-collar jobs, our schools need to train local residents for the kinds of jobs that are being created in the city.
- .. While job training is an important function of public education, it is important that children learn language, reasoning and communication so that they can adapt to rapid economic changes and continue to fare well in an everchanging labor marketplace.

B. EDUCATION (continued)

- .. "We used to have lots of city-wide youth groups and organizations that encouraged young people to develop leadership skills. We need to create these opportunities for broader youth participation once again."
- .. Business should be offered tax and other incentives to retrain underskilled employees and train untrained San Francisco residents.
- .. Schools should require more training in the fundamentals. More specific skills should be taught within the school system and training programs.
- .. Higher standards for graduation should be imposed. "The community college system is becoming more and more like the 13th and 14th grades."
- .. The schools, community and individual families should encourage more self-discipline and a better work ethic in children. Parents should no longer abdicate their traditional role of leadership in guiding their children along the path of ethical and social behavior and good citizenship. The school system has recently been assigned too much responsibility for this.
- .. Institutionally, the school system needs to be more adaptive to social change. Participants agreed that with society and performance expectations constantly changing, the schools need to be able to institute changes more quickly.
- .. Control of the school system -- financially and policy-wise -- should be transferred from state to local control.
- .. Higher quality teachers should be hired and promoted.
- .. Business must be more directly involved in the educational/training process. They should donate money and resources such as computers. And they should identify job skills they will require in the future.
- .. Business should tell the schools what courses and levels of education are needed for today's and tomorrow's workers and jobs.
- .. The recent decision of the San Francisco School Board and Board of Supervisors to meet regularly was pointed to as an excellent example of the type of cooperation and coordination that there should be more of in the city.

B. EDUCATION (continued)

- .. A lack of parent interest and concern with the local school system is seen as the reason for many of the problems in the schools. Children, who see that their parents are not very involved, are less motivated than they might be.
- .. Parents are less involved in part because of language problems, busing (where children from the same household are bused to different schools), and because more women are entering the work force. As one participant said, "I think we have to face the economic future and present. Women work. So we have to rethink the concept of parent involvement. I would vote for stronger involvement of both parents at hours and times that are convenient."
- .. A better way to motivate students is to improve and strengthen family life. This in turn would lead to less crime, fewer dropouts and better students overall.
- .. It is necessary to get other members of the community involved in the school system. This would include those who were not traditionally involved with local schools -- single people, married couples with no children and the elderly.
- .. An elective school board has been a mistake. As one participant put it, "We made a mistake when we went to an elected school board. When the Mayor appointed members, it was practically non-political. Now it's a political contest -- who can raise the most money."
- .. Schools need more structure in terms of academic standards and authority. It is also important to recognize the necessity of a vocational education for some students.
- .. Problems within the local school system are part of a larger national problem. Education issues are going to become a political football in the months ahead -- both at the state and federal level.
- .. San Francisco does not control or direct local educational policy formation; decisions regarding expenditures are formulated on the state level and do not adequately address local needs.
- .. Bureaucratic requirements and lack of available funds limit special skills educational enhancement programs in the schools.

B. EDUCATION (continued)

- .. Local educational programs should address the job skills needs of local businesses.
- .. Money from the city's budget surplus should be spent to address educational goals.
- .. Vandalism wastes a great deal of money which could otherwise be spent on more productive educational programs.
- .. School enrollment has declined from 100,000 to 60,000. There are 5,000 immigrants per year. One-third of the students are newcomers to this country. Fewer than ever -- 20% -- come from families on welfare. This reflects the exodus of welfare families to the East Bay.
- .. We need a business person on the school board.
- .. The city's schools stand empty after 2:30 while the Community Colleges have people waiting for ESL and adult education courses.
- .. Schools don't go on field trips because they can't afford the bus fare that MUNI can't/won't forgive. There should be some way to get them to work that out together.

C. JOBS/LABOR

- .. A major city problem is that only a small percentage of new jobs being created in the city are going to city residents. City residents don't have the skills to compete for many of the new jobs and there is a need for job training and education programs to deal with this urgent need.
- .. Rising land costs are driving out space intensive businesses which employ blue-collar workers. HQ-type companies are replacing them and moving out of the downtown core as well.
- .. The city should attempt to retain blue collar jobs for those who aren't able to compete for managerial, professional and technical jobs in San Francisco. Without blue-collar jobs, many less skilled workers and their families will be forced to leave San Francisco.
- .. The Port of San Francisco was undermined by city policy which gave higher priority to highrise office building construction. These types of policies displace blue-collar jobs and cause gentrification which, in turn, destroys the diversity of population which has always made the city unique.
- .. The city has gone too far in attempting to be "the headquarters city." Too much emphasis is placed on the creation of professional, managerial and technical jobs and not enough on the creation of blue collar jobs. A dissenting view was voiced by one participant who said, "We spend too much time trying to turn back the clock, preserving a world which no longer exists. The world is changing and we'd better take advantage of the need for computer technicians and new occupations."
- .. Offer incentives to light industry to stay in the city. They are needed to maintain a more diverse economic base, to create jobs for blue-collar workers.
- .. Creation of jobs for unskilled and semiskilled people should be a major priority of government at all levels. As one participant remarked, "We'll never solve the crime problem and strengthen the overall social fabric of the city unless low-income people and minorities have jobs."
- .. Although it will not be easy, the city must attract more blue-collar jobs because that is all San Francisco residents are qualified for. "Building more banks and corporate headquarters won't solve our employment problems here in San Francisco," as one participant remarked.

C. JOBS/LABOR (continued)

- .. Youth employment is a serious problem in San Francisco and some way must be found to enlist the cooperation of unions in solving it. Presently, the unions are a major road block to businesses opening up new entry-level jobs for youth.
- .. Businesses should be granted tax incentives if they hire those who tend to be chronically unemployed.
- .. Certain areas of the city should be set aside (zoned) for merchants and small businesses as a way of encouraging entrepreneurial enterprises. A side benefit in having more small businesses is that shopping will remain convenient for San Francisco residents.
- .. Business should be offered tax and other incentives to train underskilled employees.
- .. City policy needs to address the employment needs of all San Francisco residents and attract blue-collar jobs to meet the needs of those currently unable to compete for higher paying professional and technical jobs.
- .. There is a need to develop technical job skills so that, in the future, San Francisco residents can take advantage of the jobs being created in high technology and other new industries.
- .. The key question to ask about the city in the future would be: How many of the people have good, solid jobs? Essential for the continued viability of the city are jobs for minorities and jobs for youth. Light industry must not be allowed to leave (it was noted that the payroll tax encourages exodus to the suburbs) because the preservation of blue-collar jobs is critically important and new jobs must be generated. The city was seen as becoming too service-oriented; it is important to retain diversity for the economic future of the city.
- .. The city should be more aggressive in attracting jobs that are suitable for San Francisco residents, especially the less skilled members of the city's work force.
- .. Union wage scales are too low for blue-collar workers to afford the high cost of living in San Francisco.
- .. Increasing computerization of service jobs is increasing greater job loss.
- .. Office decentralization contributes to dramatic job losses in San Francisco.

C. JOBS/LABOR (continued)

- .. Employment needs of youth and unskilled and blue-collar workers are not being addressed.
- .. Labor unions make unreasonable economic demands and make it harder to attract businesses.
- .. Union wage scales are too low for blue-collar workers to afford the high cost of living in San Francisco. Land costs are too high to afford to maintain competitive blue-collar industries now. Paying higher blue-collar wage rates will further price what jobs there are out of the regional, national and international marketplace.
- .. Jobs and a healthy business climate go hand-in-hand. As one participant said, "Although we talk constantly about ~~re~~ jobs, some people don't seem to recognize that it ~~is~~ the business climate that makes them possible."
- .. Education programs should be established for those who want to receive training for new employment opportunities, especially in high technology industries.
- .. San Francisco is losing industrial jobs and with them the population balance. We are becoming more professional.
- .. The Port is a potential employer of unskilled and blue-collar jobs for San Franciscans so the Port should be supported.
- .. The Port is uneconomic because of geography. It should be considered "waterfront" property and used in a way that makes more economic sense.
- .. One large company is transferring 3,000 jobs from the city to an outlying area where they won't be "scattered among rented space in 12 different buildings" and where building costs are one-third what they are in the city. The move is a benefit due to more efficient communications and the fact that 90% of the employees will work closer to home because they can't afford to live in San Francisco.
- .. The city won't "lose those jobs" because they'll be replaced by other people and other companies.

D. DOWNTOWN (BUSINESS) AND THE NEIGHBORHOODS

- .. The role of the big corporations and financial interests who are already here or who want to establish themselves is the key to the future of San Francisco. They will determine the economy of the city, the future of the neighborhoods, housing, education, and political decisions that will be made.
- .. The corporations must be persuaded that their futures are inextricably tied to that of the city and that it is in their best interests to work toward making it a place where a diverse population can live, work and become educated. One participant's comment: "The big companies seem to need educating as much as the ghetto kids do."
- .. Downtown business tends to be amoral. It cares about profit; it operates from a position of self-interest. Major businesses in San Francisco play just such a role: they have made no commitment to the city; they play no positive role in the community (except to employ some people); they live in a rarified atmosphere where they cannot see what is going on around them and cannot be communicated with. Most of the executives do not live here; their interests and commitments are elsewhere.
- .. In the past, San Francisco's business leaders had a tradition of being dedicated to the city, a long history of involvement. Now, one has to look to Oakland to find this sort of participation in the life of the city.
- .. Business leaders here tend to be from somewhere else, on their way to somewhere else. They don't understand the problems of the city and they ignore the issues. They are preoccupied with their own businesses and they fail to see the relationship between the city's problems and their own problems.
- .. Political rhetoric of some city supervisors has alienated the business community and makes it unlikely that they would want to do anything for San Francisco neighborhoods. San Francisco has had a history of hostile, anti-business attitudes.
- .. Business leaders tend to be reactive rather than active. No real appeal has been made to them. They will respond to community expectations if the issues are presented to them in an organized and forceful way. Local business leaders have been involved in supporting opera, the symphony, the cable cars, etc., but only if their help is solicited in an appropriate manner.

D. DOWNTOWN (BUSINESS) AND THE NEIGHBORHOODS

- .. The corporations' devotion to their own self-interests has been destructive in a number of ways:

Because the corporations have not been interested in the kinds of people who live in the city (minorities, lower income, etc.), workers have to be imported from the suburbs at great cost to the city. (BART, as well as other transportation systems, has been designed to deliver workers to and from the corporations, rather than for the benefit of city dwellers.)

Communities (within San Francisco) have been wiped out for the benefit of big companies and their need to expand.

Even though most of the corporate heads do not live in the city, they have been able to use their influence to sway political decisions in the city.

- .. Businesses can be shown that it would be most cost effective, on a long-term basis, to develop a city work force. This would not only save them money, but also increase productivity and eliminate many of the problems associated with having employees who live a great distance away.
- .. Corporations should not have greater involvement in the city's problems. Greater involvement means greater control and corporations are already too much involved in the political life of the city.
- .. Downtown business is the enemy: they are cold, aloof, take from the city and give back almost nothing, make their money in the city but live elsewhere and have their allegiances elsewhere.
- .. Business should do more to support the youth of the city, develop training programs and help to integrate the young into the city's economic life.
- .. Young managers rising in the corporations ought to be encouraged (and given incentives) by their supervisors to become politically and culturally active. Kaiser in Oakland does this.
- .. Businesses must be made to take some responsibility for what happens to the city and for the quality of life of its residents. They must sponsor job training and job development for local people.

D. DOWNTOWN (BUSINESS) AND THE NEIGHBORHOODS

- .. It is not good for the city's future that it could be determined by a corporation's feeling the need for expansion, or by incoming speculators, rather than by a social or political structure that represents the people of the city. Unbridled growth, with no plans to handle the congestion, dislocation and social problems, is the city's misfortune.
- .. Business needs to be more involved in a cooperative process of identifying problems and proposing solutions. One participant's comment: "The way the process usually works is: everyone goes off in their own corner and comes up with a list of demands. Then the different sides are asked to get together. Why not get business and neighborhood representatives together at the very beginning as problems are being defined. If this were done, there would be more cooperation."
- .. The Chamber of Commerce should "support the community" and not just the downtown interests.
- .. Business subsidies are not stable. They contain the seeds of destruction.
- .. San Francisco is the headquarters, communications, service and trading center of the Bay Area. It is part of a region.
- .. San Francisco can't be a manufacturing center. It takes too much expensive and scarce land.
- .. This a growing trade city that uses the peripheral area to carry out the related functions.
- .. The Port of Oakland makes much more sense than San Francisco. Yet none of the trading or shipping companies have left the city. Business is better than ever. San Francisco is the communications gateway to the Pacific.
- .. San Francisco will do the marketing, Oakland will do the delivery and other areas the manufacturing.
- .. There has to be an interchange of talents and job opportunities. We have to take a regional view and not be too parochial.
- .. San Francisco is the largest landowner in San Mateo and Alameda counties. Yet the counties compete with each other.

D. DOWNTOWN (BUSINESS) AND THE NEIGHBORHOODS

- .. San Francisco started off as a gold mining center, then became a seaport, then a tourist center and now an office center.
- .. Big business and tourism have to accommodate the city's residents.
- .. Business is already working on city problems through the Bay Area Council, SPUR, Crown Zellerbach Committee and the Chamber's Strategic Plan.
- .. The business community is not sensitive to the needs of other communities influenced by business policies.
- .. Economic pressure is driving families and the middle class out of San Francisco and reducing the city's stable tax base.
- .. While it may be true that some large companies do almost nothing, others do a great deal; it all stems from the direction of their leadership. (The feeling was that it is grossly unfair to tar everyone with the same brush.)
- .. It's absolutely wrong that business doesn't care; if it weren't for big business, this city would really be in trouble. They give time, money, they use their own staffs to organize.
- .. It's a favorite game to knock business. It's universal.
- .. It's important to consider who some of these people are who yell and scream about downtown. They have a different perception of San Francisco: they don't want business here, they don't care about new development. They are unemployed, or underemployed, they are malcontents, they have no constituency.
- .. Business gets a bum rap ...media, too. What we need to do is stop rapping at each other and work on the common goal of improving the city.
- .. If you force business to pay for a lot of these things that people think business ought to pay for, businesses will move out. (Then you have fewer businesses to pay for anything.)

D. DOWNTOWN (BUSINESS) AND THE NEIGHBORHOODS

- .. Business benefitted greatly from Proposition 13 and, if business is to have a responsibility to the city, they should pay their fair share of the tax base; out of this could come the possibility of better schools, a better environment and some affordable housing.
- .. The big corporations are isolated from and indifferent to the community's needs.

E. TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

- .. Too many automobiles and lack of adequate parking. High density housing is a possible solution to city housing problems but dependence on the automobile and the absence of parking makes this impossible in San Francisco.
- .. San Francisco needs to make a stronger commitment to public transportation.
- .. San Francisco should view the public transportation situation as Bay Area-wide and develop a comprehensive plan to avoid unnecessary or duplicate service.
- .. Complete BART so that commuters don't need to bring their cars into the city.
- .. Use of public transportation could be encouraged by lower fares, less crowded vehicles and more reliable service.
- .. San Francisco needs senior-accessible public transportation.
- .. Local businesses lose business because of expensive/unavailable parking.
- .. Costly parking tickets particularly hurt low-income residents in high-density neighborhoods who cannot afford garages.
- .. Out-of-town commuters preempt parking availability for residents on neighborhood streets.
- .. Out-of-date parking spaces designed for huge cars and over large bus zones contribute to the scarcity of downtown parking.
- .. Most downtown traffic congestion is generated by commuters trying to enter or leave the city, not by intracity travelers.
- .. Street sweeping addresses the concerns of tourists rather than the parking needs of residents.
- .. Eliminate cars from some of the more congested downtown streets. Turn them into pedestrian malls.
- .. Raise bridge tolls to \$2.00 and have some sort of toll for drivers coming into the city from the peninsula in order to discourage driving into the city.
- .. Stop giving preferential treatment to commuter buses. They (specifically mentioned were Marin County buses) are allowed to make turns, pick-ups, etc., that are denied to local buses.

E. TRANSPORTATION/PARKING (continued)

- .. Double parking downtown inhibits both business activities and the provision of emergency services.
- .. A better public transportation system is needed for the city. As one participant put it, "If you have good public transportation, people will take it. You need good public transportation so cars will be left on the periphery."
- .. The public transit system in San Francisco is good, but there is room for improvement. There are problems with overcrowding, and there is an inadequate number of buses.

F. THE POLITICAL PROCESS

- .. Direct election of city boards and commissions would not lead to a meaningful increase in public control over the city's decision-making process.
- .. City government too often sides with downtown against the neighborhoods because it is better organized and more cohesive.

One participant's comment: "Money is part of it but we (neighborhood based coalitions) are so easy to pull apart...we don't have the staff or the time that the downtown corporations do." Another comment: "Downtown has the funds to contribute to local campaigns and that automatically gives them access and influence to make their positions known."

- .. Societal values are changing and some forum is needed to explore and understand these changes. This could be a useful first step toward enhancing communication between competing interests and the city.
- .. The electoral system is the appropriate way to integrate people into the decision-making process. Those who actually vote in San Francisco are not representative of all residents. Therefore, new voters must be encouraged.
- .. Major issues, such as down-zoning in the neighborhoods, should be put to public votes.
- .. A politically "neutral" institution in San Francisco might be successful in setting up some kind of policy planning process that incorporated citizen input in a meaningful way.
- .. Consensus could be more easily reached if all political participants were educated to the effective process and full impact of decision-making activity.
- .. The political decision-making process would be more effective if it encouraged and rewarded the participation of individuals in non-factional political activity.
- .. Most pressing city problems require the cooperation of federal and state governments in order for solutions to be found. Housing, job creation, and other problems cannot be solved without funding assistance or policy changes at higher levels of government.

F. THE POLITICAL PROCESS (continued)

- .. San Francisco should continue to elect progressive congressional representatives and state legislators who are able to align themselves with others of like mind. The city should remain a leader in the national effort to reorder priorities and give greater emphasis to urban problems.
- .. The present political process permits an individual or small group to impede the will of the majority through lawsuits and political machinations.
- .. Special interest groups generally perceive that their reason for existence is to oppose other special interests.
- .. Elected officials must show greater leadership to encourage communities to work together.
- .. There should be greater neighborhood involvement in the development of commission policies.
- .. The local political process is not too conflictual and polarized.

G. CITY GOVERNMENT

- .. City government gives the city no leadership and there is little hope of dealing successfully with the city's social problems unless and until this can be changed. There is no real planning, the Board of Supervisors is incompetent, the Mayor has no control over the Board of Supervisors, there are too many regulations, too many city employees, special interest groups get too much attention, and the City Charter is a disaster.
- .. The city is unresponsive to the needs of the people.
- .. The Mayor has too much power, which thereby reduces the amount of democratic involvement possible in city government.
- .. It is a show or strictly a formality that the city's neighborhood groups are involved in the decision-making process. In reality, the votes have already been counted and the people have no power.
- .. Some of the city's ethnic groups, such as Asian and Hispanic, are grossly underrepresented in city government.
- .. There is no real planning in the Planning Commission. It does nothing but follow the Mayor's lead.
- .. Have a city government that is more accountable to the city's people, rather than being a group of "hand-picked" choices of the Mayor who only carry out her wishes.
- .. Initiative/referendum and recall allow extremist political groups to get too much attention and actually halt the orderly process of government. One participant's comment:

"The recent Feinstein recall is a classic example. Every politician in the city had to drop everything in order to see which way the wind was blowing. Many serious problems were put on hold while people waited to see how the recall vote turned out."
- .. Some reform of the initiative/referendum and recall processes is called for. They should be preserved but there should be some limitation on how and when they can be used. The process is frequently abused by industry groups that have the funds to "undo" what elected officials have already decided. (The recent successful effort on the part of the tobacco industry to overturn the city's anti-smoking ordinance was pointed to as an example of this problem.)

G. CITY GOVERNMENT (continued)

- .. City government institutions are in need of reform and another charter revision effort is required. The major problem is one of accountability with too many actors able to "pass the buck until no one knows who to blame for policies."
- .. The city must develop a method of comprehensive long-range planning that recognizes the interdependency of problems and solutions from one policy area to another. The Board of Supervisors has a charter-imposed limitation on its planning abilities.
- .. Return to district elections for members of the Board of Supervisors as a way of increasing government responsiveness to citizen needs.
- .. Many leaders tend to be too tied to the narrow outlooks of their prime constituencies. One participant's comment: "It is very difficult to ignore your basic constituency and this is probably how it should be in a democracy."
- .. Because of the city's diverse population, politics is very polarized and leaders of certain factions frequently take advantage of the fragmentation to further their own political ends.
- .. The political structure does not promote stability. Every vote is subject to reaffirmation. It is becoming increasingly apparent that not all groups have a voice and that City Hall responds to calls and letters. That may sound paradoxical, but many people have given up and the voices that are heard are neither representative nor are they given equal weight.
- .. City Commissioners should be given proper preparation regarding their responsibilities and the impact of their activities.
- .. Polarization, in and of itself, is not necessarily bad as long as political conflict is kept within reasonable bounds. Any city with as much diversity as San Francisco will be fairly polarized.
- .. Although there are numerous examples of "good leadership," on the whole, the process of government frustrates leaders who truly want to solve problems. Charter reform is necessary in order to clarify roles and responsibilities.

G. CITY GOVERNMENT (continued)

- .. There is a widespread alienation with government everywhere, a sense that "the system doesn't really work anymore." It is a problem in San Francisco, but it is also part of a larger, national problem.
- .. Conflict is healthy in a democracy and inevitable in a city as diverse as San Francisco. However, too much polarization, hardened positions, a refusal to compromise and an absence of pragmatic orientation to problem solving. One participant's comment:

"There is no tradition of making things work in this city. People have their own agendas. There's no middle ground, no compromise, no collective sense... too many little fiefdoms."
- .. Increase the responsiveness of government to the needs of local citizens. Government should respond more to the needs of San Francisco and less to the needs of downtown corporations and the tourist industry.
- .. The City Charter inhibits the solution of problems in several ways: (a) it severely limits the authority of the Board of Supervisors; (b) it does not make the City Commissions accountable to the voters; (c) it limits public input to those departments controlled by the Chief Administrative Officers.
- .. The Planning Department and Commission are arbitrary and uncooperative with both ordinary citizens and real estate developers.
- .. The decentralization of power among the Mayor, Board of Supervisors and Chief Administrative Officers is good for the city because it provides balance.
- .. Decentralized power is bad because it prohibits any one institution from taking definitive action.
- .. A simplified, more logically organized government structure under a revised City Charter.
- .. Elected officials, particularly members of the Board of Supervisors, define their constituencies too narrowly and lack a city-wide perspective. Supervisors tend to think of themselves as representatives of their old districts or other interest groups. The Board encourages a "specialization by constituency" and this hampers the search for solutions that are in the interest of the city as a whole.

G. CITY GOVERNMENT (continued)

- .. Leaders need to be willing to say "no" to their primary supporters on occasion and exhibit more independent thinking in solving problems. "If some elected officials set the example, others might follow, and that's what this fragmented community needs," according to one participant.
- .. The actual power wielded by the Mayor is very limited, and this is unfortunate. Power and leadership are strongly linked together, and the lack of power is contributing toward the lack of leadership in the city.
- .. The City Charter is the cause for many of the city's leadership problems. As one participant put it, "We're the only city that can't reform the reforms because the Charter is archaic and gets in the way of change."
- .. The social problems facing the city cannot be changed or improved until the city has some responsible leadership, leaders who are truly interested in solving these problems rather than doing only what is politically expedient.
- .. The city has no real leadership. Those who run the city are a bunch of dopes and clowns who have done nothing of significance in the past and have no future. It probably could not be any other way, since no one with any substance would give up a good paying job to run for office and be publicly abused everyday of his life.
- .. Those who manage the city should consider the economic, not just the social, ramifications of their policies. They should manage the city as a "corporate asset."
- .. Career politicians often consider their own job security as number one priority; a limited length of time in office would direct leaders' attention to more important issues.
- .. Reduce the number of supervisors, raise their salary in hopes of attracting higher quality to run for office. Reduce the number of staff people and increase their responsibilities.
- .. Do something about Charter reform. One participant's comment, "No one has the guts to do it -- the supervisors won't do it -- because it's not a good political issue."
- .. Institute some sort of strategic planning group, change should be planned and managed. It is currently out of control.

G. CITY GOVERNMENT (continued)

- .. San Francisco has no institution that is responsible for long-range planning. One participant's comment:

"The Board of Supervisors spends too much time responding to immediate crises and often gets sidetracked on unimportant issues while the big issues with enormous long-range implications get almost no attention."

- .. San Francisco has the most successful major metropolitan government in the whole nation. It's the democratic process at work.
- .. There is too much reliance on ballot measures because the Board doesn't want to take responsibility for making hard choices.
- .. City government is good at managing immediate problems and crises, but more effort should go into determining broad goals. One participant's comment:

"So many fights I've been involved in are needless. If the city was in agreement on the goal of halting displacement of middle-income families, for example, then we wouldn't spend time arguing over a lot of housing related issues we are constantly fighting about."
- .. The Charter should be changed so that the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors have more responsibility for setting broad policy goals. Currently, the city's top elected leadership is too preoccupied with administration and implementation of policy.
- .. There is a need for more information and better management and analysis of long-term trends. One participant's comment:

"We inventory land and physical structures...that is easy to quantify. We don't collect enough data on human resources and the social dimension. It is no wonder that we can't make good decisions."

- .. A comprehensive human resources inventory is needed in San Francisco. The project should collect housing, employment, health and other data so that, as one participant said, "We're not shooting in the dark when we try to solve problems."

H. PRESERVATION OF DIVERSITY

- .. The ideal city would be a solid mix of different socioeconomic groups, families, the elderly, the young, recent arrivals, etc. The city would have a sense of community and would be comprised of communities interacting with each other, rather than ethnic or life-style ghettos that have little to do with one another.
- .. San Francisco's diversity should be preserved and enhanced. It is San Francisco's great strength. Capitalize on it and build a city which is economically and racially integrated. Recognize that such a goal is almost unachievable. Economics will play an overwhelming role in deciding who gets to live here.
- .. Retain the "rambunctious quality and unusual spirit of the city." One participant's comment: "I hope we never get too staid and respectable." Another participant's comment: "I want San Francisco to remain different from the rest of the cities in the country and I still can't fully describe exactly how it is different."
- .. There is a pattern throughout the city of keeping Chinatown Asian, keeping the Castro gay, keeping the Mission Hispanic, etc. The people there feel as though they own these areas. It would be far better to have a mix of people, to create an atmosphere of tolerance. Everyone should be able to buy and rent housing where he chooses. The media and the law enforcement agencies should encourage understanding between groups, rather than exploiting and sensationalizing the conflicts that exist.
- .. Gays in particular should recognize that 'gentrification' has caused black and other minority families to be pushed out of some areas.
- .. While San Francisco's diversity is good, it often leads to factionalized interest groups which bog the city down with their bickering.
- .. There should be a balance in the city: of racial and lifestyle groups, of young and old, of income groups. The city should pride itself on its tradition of diversity. This no longer seems possible, however, with the middle classes and families being pushed out, senior citizens with nowhere to live, and the city becoming more and more "ghettoized."
- .. Preserve the unique character and charm of San Francisco's architectural heritage, dramatic views, neighborhood speciality shops.

H. PRESERVATION OF DIVERSITY (continued)

- .. The ethnic and social diversity of the city should be preserved in a spirit of mutual accommodation. One participant's comment: "San Francisco has always provided a place for people who are marginal."
- .. Preserve San Francisco's unique racial, ethnic, class and lifestyle diversity. Another participant's comment: "I don't want to live in an all gay city or an all upper income city or an all white city. I came here because it was broader based."
- .. San Francisco's toleration of diversity attracts anti-social transients who distract resources from more productive resident services.
- .. The preservation of San Francisco's rich social, ethnic and cultural diversity. As one participant said, "We are all minorities together in this city." The diversity present in the city is seen as "healthy" and one of the foremost qualities of life in San Francisco.

I. SAVING THE NEIGHBORHOODS

- .. We shouldn't let developers do what they want at the expense of the people who live in the area ... when the last developer builds the last development and leaves, satisfied, those who live there for the next 30 years have to deal with congestion ... the problems ... the time frame of developers is very different from the time frame of tenants.
- .. Massive government may not work ... but neither does letting the market do whatever it wants.
- .. We need to face up to questions: How big? How much? How many office buildings? Are there any thoughts of limits? Any plan? ... American cities hate dealing with these questions.
- .. The Tenderloin is a real neighborhood, crime in that area is overrated, it has the potential for being an ideal place for a variety of city dwellers. It is convenient for all kinds of businesses, an easy place for the elderly to live, and inherently an interesting, exciting area.
- .. Revitalize neighborhood economies so that merchants of small businesses can compete effectively against the franchises of chain stores that threaten to destroy neighborhood character.
- .. Preserving neighborhoods means more integration, tolerance and preservation of cultural heritage. No participants have any suggestions about the paradox these goals represent.
- .. It is important to maintain San Francisco as a city of neighborhoods, of families, of low and moderate income people, as well as higher income people, as an alive and diverse city. It is critical that the city develops a greater sense of itself as a community, with citizens who will be involved in the city's future, rather than separated into small, alienated subgroupings which leave the city with no real collective voice.
- .. Public policy should be used to encourage middle-class to move back to San Francisco to provide a more stable community and broaden the tax base.
- .. A major problem is that residents of the Tenderloin have no voice, no political power, and that long before the potential of the Tenderloin as a neighborhood ever gets taken seriously, the area will have long since been demolished and turned over to the big commercial developers.

I. SAVING THE NEIGHBORHOODS (continued)

- .. The city should concentrate on rehabilitating and renovating old buildings, not simply destroying and redeveloping blighted areas.
- .. There is a need to promote a sense of community within the neighborhoods. The Sunset, where a number of new people have moved in, many speaking different languages, is one example. The different backgrounds of these new people have contributed toward a loss of a sense of community. There is a need for new institutions to create community in the midst of this diversity.

J. MINORITIES AND OTHER POPULATION SEGMENTS

- .. San Francisco is seen as a city that is somewhat more cosmopolitan than other American cities, where minorities have learned that confrontation is not the best way to initiate change, where legislation is the method of choice.
- .. There is great potential for racial strife in the city. The huge influx of Asians within a short period of time is causing tensions to rise, and there is danger because of the competition that is created when two or three ethnic groups fight over the same piece of pie. The problem is compounded by the fact that Asian groups are grossly underrepresented in the city. It is critical to convince more Asians, who tend to be more involved with their families than with community affairs, to become more involved politically.
- .. There should be more leadership training programs for newcomers and minorities about working with groups and making an impact on city government and/or other interested groups. MALDEF, the S.F. Redevelopment Agency apprenticeship and the Oakland Tribune programs were mentioned as good examples.
- .. Youth and those over sixty are the city's largest population segments. Youth needs improved basic academic education and job training. Multipurpose parks and day-care centers were mentioned. The older population is often not fully functioning and needs assistance; security; art, music and other cultural opportunities; and protection from a constantly rising tax burden.
- .. Institutions that serve the elderly would be more successful in keeping seniors healthy and happy if they allowed the elderly a maximum of personal choice and responsibility in all areas of decision making.
- .. The elderly have resources of time and experience which could be used to solve city problems, such as the provision of sufficient day-care services.
- .. There are minority -- ethnic, racial, sexual -- groups which are not stimulated or treated equally by the city's "have's."
- .. Children's needs are low on the list of priorities in San Francisco. One participant's comment: "A city without children is a city that is dying."
- .. The city must continue to be a leader in the area of helping the aged, emotionally disturbed, physically handicapped and the destitute.

J. MINORITIES AND OTHER POPULATION SEGMENTS (continued)

- .. Government at all levels needs to share in this responsibility because cities lack the funds to pay for these vital services by themselves.
- .. Racism discourages cooperative resolution of community problems and promotes ethnic ghettoization.
- .. Refugees especially suffer low-resource needs and don't know where/how to find assistance.
- .. Minorities need to be brought into the mainstream while preserving San Francisco's ethnic and cultural diversity.
- . Issues affecting senior citizens should be given more attention.
- .. The gay community is intolerant. As one participant said, "If you're against them (the gay community) on an issue, then you are wrong. And you're seen as anti-gay."
- .. The problems of elderly citizens are not addressed properly.
- .. Businesses and public facilities should be encouraged to provide child-care facilities.

K. THE MEDIA

- .. The press, both print and broadcast, is irresponsible in its reporting, as well as in its editorial policies. It fosters a "trivialization of life."
- .. Business is the culprit by nurturing lightweight programming through support of advertising dollars.
- .. The City Section in the Examiner is an exception, "almost a completely different paper."
- .. Community newspapers are essential vehicles for informing the public and influencing policymaking.
- .. Newspapers are monopolistic, they distort the news, they are manipulative, sensational, and simply do not represent the people of San Francisco. They speak for a very narrow segment of the community.
- .. There is not much hope that ways can be found to make the newspapers and the television news more responsive to people's needs, or more interested in supporting the city's groups in their efforts to come together. Rather, they exploit the conflicts that keep these groups apart.
- .. An organization should be formed for the sole purpose of dealing with the media as a problem, since what they do can have serious effects on the entire community.
- .. Local newspapers do not reflect the diverse interests in San Francisco.
- .. The media does not report a balanced view of social situations within the city. Reporting is surface coverage only, with a lack of in-depth coverage. Reporting on local schools is abysmal, and so is reporting on local legislature.
- .. Media is to be criticized, but there are high expectations for providing the communications ability and resources for reaching and involving more of the community. The media can be used as a learning device to show how the community works, to help identify and establish issues and to promote a city forum.
- .. The media does not provide enough current local news and what is presented tends to be sensationalist and confrontational and not issue-oriented; there should be more information on the process of city government.

K. THE MEDIA (continued)

- .. The Chronicle and the Examiner are a disgrace, an embarrassment to a city of the stature of San Francisco. The newspapers have no sense of responsibility, are not in touch and care little about the problems of the city, and cover the issues in a superficial and redimentary way.
- .. You can't intelligently address issues unless the public is informed. They're not.
- .. Broadcast media is to be less criticized but is still considered substandard: too much emphasis on local happenings and sensationalism, too little emphasis on hard news.
- .. Local media (particularly television) provides a wholly inadequate and sensational perspective of public events.
- .. The media needs to become more responsible, more positive, and thorough in their investigation. They tend to skim the surface on local issues, and take the path of least resistance.

L. REVIVAL OF PARTICIPATION

- .. Revive participation, activism and involvement so that citizens are less reliant on government alone to define and solve problems. As one participant said: "In the 1960's and 1970's, we had a burst of social and political activism, but now we seem to lack conceptual models to motivate and guide participation. People are frustrated because they haven't gotten enough results from all their work in the past. The old models don't seem to have worked so the result has been cynicism and apathy."
- .. Expand interest and participation in neighborhood and civic affairs on the part of all citizens in the city.
- .. People who live in the city must be willing to get involved, must be shown that their efforts can make a difference, must begin to consider the larger issues rather than limiting themselves to the concerns of their own smaller groups.
- .. The political, economic and social systems should encourage and allow all residents more personal responsibility and more control over their own lives.
- .. Increased popular participation in the local policy making process on the part of rank and file members of various diverse constituencies in the city and less decision making by elites and "special interest groups."
- .. The city requires a more representational government. There should be a return to district elections. If not possible, at least a form of advisory board might be developed which is made up of appointed representatives from neighborhoods to serve in a policy function to the Board of Supervisors.
- .. City problems are best solved through active citizen participation. More emphasis should be placed on citizen participation in all city departments and programs.
- .. New and innovative ways of encouraging community-based problem solving are needed. People with similar problems should coalesce, define their needs and be supported in determining a plan of action that can be successfully implemented.

L. REVIVAL OF PARTICIPATION (continued)

- .. In response to renewing city values there are these needs: Develop stronger neighborhood associations; certain crimes should be handled outside the court system and at the community level; understand the values of other cultural communities in order to live together in the same city; provide more community meeting places and opportunities.

M. CITY PLANNING

- .. City government is not willing to gauge the impact of continued high rise building construction on transit, housing, and other city problems. As one participant remarked, "Our leaders aren't looking ten years ahead... they're only looking at the next election cycle."
- .. There is no evidence of a long range plan. The planning department's function is not clear. "I don't know what they do." "Why don't we ask them for a city plan; not only about the physical characteristics of the city, but also the social and services aspects." City government is too reactive and proceeds without a plan or idea about the consequences of its actions.
- .. Return to the Master Plan developed and adopted by the city many years ago. Deviation from the Plan marked the downfall of social balance within the city. The concept of consensus is not the proper means of planning for city and community growth. The process is better left to an elected or appointed "visionary." The Master Plan is being ignored and/or violated.
- .. The city should change the perception that it is opposed to new ideas for developing commercial and residential real estate.
- .. More office space is not needed in order to maintain employment opportunities for San Franciscans. Non-residents are the primary beneficiaries of newly created jobs in downtown highrises.
- .. Firm group rules should be established for real estate investments. Once established, the rules should be honored by the city.
- .. The city should avoid further delay in making decisions and implementing plans for the South of Market area.
- .. The city should stop its policy of locating most public housing projects and health care facilities in just several geographic areas of the city.
- .. Anyone with preservationist or progressive ideas has been eliminated from the Planning Commission.
- .. Planning should be done on a realistic basis and not wishful thinking.

M. CITY PLANNING (continued)

- .. We lack a vision and comprehensive plan. The city Master Plan is supposed to guide and shape the city. We need to revise it. We need to address the plan publicly and translate it into zoning and quit tripping over each other bureaucratically. We need to regulate the city and the plan to our regional situation.

N. ARTS/CULTURE

- .. San Francisco has become a regional arts center which local wealth cannot easily support. San Francisco must reassess its pride of self-sufficiency and embrace the "new" money of Silicon Valley, Marin and East Bay.
- .. Development South of Market is driving independent artists out of San Francisco.
- .. Corporations and foundations tend to fund "mainstream" arts/culture while ignoring burgeoning or minority arts organizations.
- .. Arts/culture organizations in San Francisco benefit too few residents, and especially do not address the interests of ethnic/racial minorities.
- .. Local arts/culture institutions divert resources from primary needs such as housing, jobs and education.
- .. Arts/culture need to be more accessible to low income/senior citizens.

O. ENVIRONMENT

- .. There is a need, even at the local level, to set policies that minimize the risk of contamination from hazardous and toxic waste materials. This is an issue the Board of Supervisors needs to address due to the danger of inaction at the state and federal levels of government.
- .. Not enough citizen attention goes to issues such as sewers and garbage disposal. These issues are not very glamorous but have enormous implications for the local quality of life.
- .. San Francisco should reestablish/preserve its open space natural environment.
- .. Continue efforts toward the cleanup of San Francisco Bay.
- .. The city is not in serious trouble yet, but the trend is downward, toward a deterioration of the environment.
- .. The Federal Golden Gateway is expanding and adding enormously to the quality of the city and its residents' outdoor environment. Meanwhile, the city is not maintaining and upgrading deteriorated parks and recreation areas. The quality of street repair and maintenance has declined. Sewer service and quality is still declining.
- .. Parking and traffic are more crowded and creating more congestion, more accidents and making it more difficult to carry on blue-collar trades.

P. HEALTH CARE

- .. Health care is lacking among the poor, the old, the gay and other minority communities.
- .. San Francisco needs an adequate public health maintenance program, particularly for seniors and children.
- .. Health care costs need to be kept down because of the number of lower income and fixed income people in the city.
- .. San Francisco's health care costs are exacerbated by the quality and variety of its services which attract people from other areas who would not otherwise be residents. Even outside users benefit from the city's subsidy for health care services.

Q. CRIME AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- .. Crime is serious. Crime is related to economic conditions and to housing issues. Crime is linked to hopelessness.
- .. Residents assume crime is here to stay.
- .. Resolving resource inequities would, in large part, eliminate reasons for crime.
- .. Crime is a long-term problem, one resulting from our inability to create a better, more just society.
- .. The city has to take the lead in dealing with repeat violent offenders. Local elected officials are dragging their feet when it comes to enacting laws to enable this to happen.
- .. Reform prisons by development of educational programs to teach prisoners skills and to develop their self-esteem.
- .. Law enforcement is becoming a disaster in the city; it has become a status symbol to break the law.
- .. Crime is a result of poor education and lack of jobs. Attack those root causes and crime will decline.

V. WILL CONSENSUS WORK?

- .. There is a need for communication and dialogue between neighborhood groups and business leaders, but consensus is hardly an ideal if we really value our diversity.
- .. We should attempt to build consensus on broad values or goals and then allow disagreement to exist on more narrowly defined issues or problem areas.
- .. It would be useful to identify two or three pilot projects in which a consensus or cooperative model could be tested in an experimental situation. If a small number of policy areas could be selected where goals are clear cut and already widely shared, then the pilot projects would have a greater possibility of success.
- .. There are too many different interests with strong feelings for consensus to be realized. Doubt that SFSC can actually lead to anything capable of improving the process of communication and decision making in the city.
- .. SFSC is perceived as a valuable resource mechanism to bring together moderate representatives of various constituencies.
- .. A major barrier to consensus is the tendency for city factions to demand that their spokespeople be tough and never get co-opted. Ideologically motivated leaders are not pragmatic and many San Francisco leaders tend to be idealogues.
- .. Another barrier to consensus is the large number of players in San Francisco politics. One participant's comment: "Consensus is easier to achieve if you've got a smaller number of groups to accommodate."
- .. Leadership committed to the consensual model is a critical variable. One participant's comment: "If a few leaders would take the time to identify people, communicate and brign people together, we could sow the seeds of more co-operative ventures."
- .. There is need for expanded participation from the business community of consensus is to succeed. "Why aren't there more business community leaders in these focus group sessions?"
- .. Under present conditions, public policy flows from the power relationships within City Hall and not from any kind of consensus among the electorate.

- .. An earthquake could be the next "political event" in San Francisco significant enough to create consensus.
- .. The proposed development of Mission Bay and other South of Market projects are examples of failure to achieve consensus among city, neighborhood and business institutions.
- .. In order for consensus to be used effectively in the land use and planning decisions process, the fundamental premise of individual "God-given" property rights will have to be challenged.
- .. Continue planning through consensus. A system of this nature might stimulate policymaking in the future.
- .. The process of consensus is too difficult, will bring about results based on coalition or private interest, and would be so time consuming that no results could be possible.
- .. A zero-sum perspective of San Francisco discourages consensus because everyone feels the need to compete for what little there is.
- .. The San Francisco system of decision-making makes it too easy for an individual or small group to impede the will of the majority through lawsuits and political machinations.
- .. San Francisco's political system has a growing perspective that the only alternative to succumbing to special interest group pressure is to counter it with a greater special interest group power.
- .. Capitalism and consensus are incompatible -- those with economic power get to call the shots.
- .. San Francisco's political and governmental leaders make no effort to operate on the basis of consensus. They are not going to change.
- .. Difficult economic conditions discourage consensus because everyone feels the need to fight over what little there is.
- .. San Francisco has a strong and growing tradition of special interests fighting it out as a way of dealing with community problems.
- .. The San Francisco system of decision making makes it too easy for an individual or small group to hold up the will of the majority through lawsuits and public grandstanding -- there is not enough encouragement of a democratic decision-making process.

- .. Consensus will be most easily and successfully achieved if there are better communication systems established among government, neighborhoods and major business interests.
- .. Little of any value could or would be accomplished by SFSC or any other group of its kind. Such organizations are either kidding themselves or lying to everyone else, since the truth is that a decision has been made to make San Francisco a city for the rich. The official position is "if you're poor and third world, get out."
- .. While it is a form of catharsis to come together and discuss issues and ventilate frustrations, it is a waste of time. One participant's comment: "We are talking to ourselves. We are the powerless ones."
- .. The failure of the SFSC process to produce observable results will serve to further discourage consensual interaction between political participants.
- .. The SFSC process should culminate in a plan of action and responsive activity, not just another report to sit on the shelf.
- .. Special interest groups are too narrowly goal-defined. The win/lose perspective of these groups promotes adversarial contest and discourages consensus.
- .. The present decision-making process is inherently a negative one rather than a positive process toward goal achievement: policy leaders primarily reduce budgets, fail to approve, veto, etc.
- .. The processes prompt critical analysis more than directed solution development, and a moderate leader without a personal special interest agenda is necessary to coalesce community representatives into goal-achieving action.
- .. It is not practical or realistic to think that a large group seeking consensus could accomplish very much. Far more can be accomplished by a small, action-oriented group -- if it were given the sanction and authority to get things done.
- .. Everyone knows what the city's problems are; the citizens know and the city officials know. They just don't want to do anything about them. There is no need for any more studies or discussions; too many have been done already. It is time to do something about the problems, not talk about them.

- .. Nothing will be accomplished by a large group of people trying to reach consensus.
- .. Have a small group of people, perhaps six or eight, that represent and get input from a broad spectrum, in the community; have one or two leaders in the group: people who have the resources and the experience to get things done, people who know how to pull individual efforts together; make sure that this group has the support of the Mayor, the politicians, the public and the media; make sure they have some power and authority.

VI. PARTICIPANTS' REACTIONS TO SFSC

Participants evinced a variety of reactions about SFSC. Many were suspicious of SFSC and its goals. They did not believe that the purpose of the discussions could be so open ended. ("SFSC must have a hidden agenda.") They expect that SFSC wants confirmation of its own viewpoints or that the discussions are a step in some other secret processes.

During the sessions, there were frequent queries about SFSC's funding, who will make decisions about the "findings" of their groups, and how they will be used.

Nevertheless, some benefits were clear. The sessions allowed leaders to meet and talk with others whom they might not have been inclined to talk with otherwise. Even though participants knew each other in passing or knew of them, they had not previously had the opportunity to meet each other face to face and learn what lay behind or beneath their "public positions."

Participants agreed that the sessions were generally an enjoyable and satisfying experience, "but that is not enough." They felt these discussions may be a starting point for further discussion about San Francisco's future.

Even among the most cynical, there was grudging willingness to participate with an organization such as SFSC because doing nothing guarantees no results. SFSC offers some hope for progress.

While most participants did not believe that the SFSC group sessions solved any problems or even offered any real solutions, many found that the groups opened their eyes to mutual appreciation and the realization that there are some mutual goals which offer the possibility to work together on the key issues.

Almost everyone agreed that the major need and goal of SFSC should be process rather than an issue or a solution to an issue.

Most agreed that it is important and healthy to meet and share views with others who are concerned about the city. They found it gratifying to find a number of areas where some sorts of agreements or common views could be shared.

"For instance, with the highrise vs. neighborhoods, you can't have a consensus in the middle of a war. It's an illusion. But you do want to foster mutual empathy and develop common information."

"Consensus gets rid of the extremes. They sort themselves out and this enables the rest to work toward a compromise."

"The way the process usually works is: everyone goes off in their own corner and comes up with a list of demands. The different sides are asked to get together. Why not get business and neighborhood representatives together at the very beginning as problems are being defined. If this were done, there would be more cooperation."

There is a clear willingness to continue the process. The process itself is important as a way of identifying needs and issues, even if no solutions are forthcoming.

"Create the structure first, then deal with the issues."

VII. POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS FOR SFSC

Participating in the sessions apparently did have the effect of instilling an interest in SFSC and a willingness to participate further. There is general interest in seeing any report that is issued by SFSC at the conclusion of the project.

One of the specific recommendations was for SFSC to issue a report summarizing the discussions held, identifying the key problems and issues, prioritizing them if possible, and outlining solutions which have been suggested.

There was also an expressed desire to hold further meetings with the group members to discuss the report and further discussions to define problems and processes which might yield solutions.

"This will call for much harder work than we did tonight -- to draft thematic definitions and then to react to them in smaller meetings."

"All of my experiences have been negative in working with academics, corporations and foundations. I've been used. They've had these meetings to defend their existing policies and haven't cared for our needs."

"If a few leaders would take the time to identify communities and bring people together, we would sow the seeds of more cooperative ventures."

Among the suggested projects that SFSC might undertake are:

Maintain a clearing house of information on the sources and funding projects of private and public foundations.

Be a source of information on what other cities are doing to plan and influence the future development of their cities and how they are doing it.

Facilitate more effective political leadership in providing resources to the city's political leaders. Hold meetings of representatives of various groups and interests.

Establish some forum to explore and examine all the changes going on in the city. This could be a useful first step toward enhancing communication between competing interests in the city.

Assume a leadership role in defining a project, enlisting support and implementing it. One such project suggested by several groups was redesigning the City Charter.

Work with the media to develop programs to show how the community works, to help establish and identify issues and promote a city-wide forum.

Get speakers to appear on talk shows to discuss the vital issues which confront San Francisco and the implications of alternative courses of action.

Encourage the city and corporations to buy TV time and sponsor local news and discussion of issues.

Develop more leadership training programs for newcomers and minorities about working with groups to make an impact on city government and/or other agencies and organizations.

Repeat the process with a more specific agenda because these topics were too broad to genuinely examine and reach consensual decisions.

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